

**ST MARY THE VIRGIN, RIVERHEAD WITH DUNTON GREEN
MINUTES**

**Meeting of the Parochial Church Council
Monday 15 November 2021
8.00pm in the Church Hall**

PRESENT:

Rachel Wigley in the Chair

Rev Mark Bridgen, Daphne Harrison (LLM),
Ronnie Todd,
Simon Bull, Michele Cooke, Karen Forster-Pearce, Richard Gibson, Jane Ibbotson, Barry Sharp, Sarah Stott, Stuart Wigley, Rachel Wigley

1 Passage of Scripture and Prayers

The meeting opened with a bible passage and prayer.

2 Apologies

Susan Allender, Alison Bull, Yvonne Holliday, Rev Andy Finn,
Rev Anne Bourne,

3 To approve Minutes of Meeting 20 September 2021

The Minutes were amended at:

“6. Church Events, 28/11 - Advent” to say 6.30pm instead of 6.00pm.

- and -

“14. Any Other Business” to say Diane, Jill, Dick and Pam instead of Diane, Jill and Pam.

They were then agreed and signed by Rachel Wigley as a true copy.

4 Matters Arising

Deanery Synod Representatives

A thank you was given to Daphne Harrison and Ronnie Todd for taking on the position of Deanery Synod Representatives.

Church Christmas Card

In the Vicar's absence, Rachel reported that Andy and Tamar had drafted a card, which she had commented on. Andy will circulate when he is better and PCC to let Andy have any comments.

5/6 Finance/Church Fabric

The Treasurer (Stuart Wigley) had sent round a note reporting on the various finance and church fabric topics.

We have been given a grant to improve the audio in church and have two years to spend it. We need to agree whether to install a new system. The Diocese has a list of resources to look at and advice on how to spend the grant. Stuart would welcome any suggestions from the PCC. Mark Bridgen advised that they have someone at Kippington with very good knowledge on the subject. Stuart will contact him. We also need to improve the Zoom connection.

The disabled toilet in the church hall is in the process of being replaced.

The church clock is not working again. It is thought the Arrester is to blame. Stuart has spoken to Smiths of Derby and told them we won't pay them until it is working properly, especially as we have already paid them several hundred pounds to cover the repairs, since it was installed. He will be speaking to them again.

With regard to parish giving, two people have signed up for the trial giving scheme where gift aid is collected automatically. There is also the opportunity for the amount to be increased each year. If anyone else would like to be on the trial, Stuart has the details.

Sarah Anderson, the DAC contact at the Diocese, had provided a helpful email to Stuart and Paul regarding various faculties and other possibilities for help with the mosaics. We have in the region of £1k left of the original legacy of £4k. Research to help us make a better informed decision will involve more expense. It was asked whether there is a cheaper option to clean the mosaics. Stuart will check the position with the Diocese.

The Parish Share was the next item to be discussed. Stuart reported that our day to day expenditure in church is £3,300 per month. The incoming and outgoing cash is generally the same and just covers itself. The income from the hall is now coming in on a regular basis. We have received a £9k grant from the Diocese for the church and church hall with no time limit for spending it. We could increase the Parish Share as a result of that, not because of increased income or less expenditure, but we would then be giving back to the Diocese what they have given us in a grant.

We are tied into a 4 year contract for gas and electric, which is a benefit after the recent huge increases for those services. We could reduce our broadband connections to one, so we just pay for one connection in church and have no WiFi in the hall. There is no other way to reduce our expenditure. The level of giving has been maintained. Giving on the contactless tap on machine in church is increasing. As a result of all the above, Stuart advised we won't be able to increase our Parish Share from its current level of £1k, as things stand at the moment, but we will look at it again at the end of the year. The only way we could afford to give the recommended amount to the Diocese is if the people on the electoral roll gave an additional £7 per week. Our Parish Share pre-Covid was £48k pa and is now £12k, due to reduced income during the pandemic; we have had no income from weddings, baptisms, etc. We need to make a bigger effort on regular giving. There is also the possibility of increasing the hall fees, which is being looked into.

It was agreed by all present to keep our Parish Share for 2022 at £1k pm.

There are funds available for the Quinquennial expenditure when needed from the church, and church hall, repair fund and won't compromise our current position. The question of money for redecorating the hall was raised and Stuart replied it may be possible. However, in the long term, the church roof is in need of major repair, particularly because it has no felt under the tiles. It was asked whether we could appeal to the village and/or fund raise with jumble sales for instance.

Stuart informed the meeting that we have found various ways of raising funds by Amazon Smile, Easy Fundraising and House Insurance, among other things.

Stuart was thanked for all his work on church finance and fabric.

7. Church Services & Events

Rachel informed the meeting that we are looking at ticketing the services over Christmas. The services are:

28/11 - Advent

Churches Together service being held in St Nicholas Church at 6.30pm

19/12 - Sunday Club Nativity at 9.30 am. Nine Lessons and Carols - time to be confirmed.
9 Lessons and Carols - time TBC

24/12 - Crib Service and Christingle Service
Limited numbers and attendance by ticket only

24/12 - Midnight Service

25/12 - Christmas Day Service – 8 o'clock and 9:30am

26/12 – Boxing Day – No 8 o'clock but a 9:30am service.

Events

11 & 12/12 - Christmas Tree Festival

Sarah Stott asked whether it would be acceptable if Christmas decorations could be left on the window ledges at the end of the Christmas Tree Festival up to Christmas, as it will be during Advent. Mark Bridgen thought it shouldn't be a problem. There is no specific direction for Anglican churches during Advent.

8. Outreach & Mission

There will be a Shoe Box Appeal this year. Daphne will ask Andy to include a note in the weekly newsletter. There is a collection point in the old John Lewis store in Knights Park, Tunbridge Wells and there will be a collection point in church.

9. Safeguarding

There was nothing new to report except to say that we have two new recruits for Sunday Club who will need to have DBS checks and do the safeguarding courses. Michele confirmed they wouldn't necessarily need to do the Leadership course whilst she is there. At the moment, of the leaders, Michele is the only one with a Leadership qualification.

10. West Sevenoaks Team Ministry Matters

Rev Mark Bridgen reminded the PCC that two representatives have left the Joint Council. One replacement is still needed to represent St Mary the Virgin. Volunteers will need approval by their

PCC but don't need to be a PCC member. For information, there are 6-7 meetings per year over a two year period.

There are six sub-groups and a 2nd meeting is to be held sometime in November. They will report back in January and the results will be passed to the three PCCs.

11. Deanery Synod Meeting

The next meeting is on 18 November. Ronnie Todd has given her apologies as she will be away. Daphne Harrison will attend and report back.

12. Sunday Club

Michele Cooke reported that there was not enough time to hold a proper Sunday Club session yesterday. The children were due to do craft amongst other things and the children were very upset that there wasn't enough time to do anything. Michele asked that the Service Sheet mentions when the Sunday Club leaves and returns. They usually return for Communion but yesterday the buzzer went and they were back for the peace. Michele mentioned that the children no longer collect the cross and process out to Be Bold since we have returned to church after the pandemic. It would be good if we restarted this.

Mark Bridgen said there were time restraints yesterday, due to it being Remembrance Sunday. Also, he was taking our service as Andy was unwell and he had to get back to St Mary, Kippington, to take their service. He felt it was probably a one off. Michele was advised to speak to Andy regarding future Sunday Club meetings to make sure the children have enough time for their craft.

13. Any Other Business

A request was made for the bible reading page numbers to be put in the newsletter. Also, could we have a few printed copies of the newsletter to be put in church.

It was agreed the Zoom meetings need to be given more publicity.

We used to have the rotas up on the notice board at the back of church and the church vestry which haven't been there since we returned. It was asked if they could be put up again. Ronnie Todd agreed to put up the rotas.

14. Date of Next Meeting

SC Tuesday 18 January 2022
PCC Monday 31 January 2022

Mark Bridgen closed the meeting with prayer